a Roman soldier, during the conferences of Epycedes and Marcellus, by numbering the courses of stone and computing their height, found the wall much lower than common opinion, and scalable by the ordinary ladders. By these means Marcellus took the city in the night, during a festival of Diana, when the inhabitants, more attentive to their superstitious observances than the means of defence, were in a state of great intoxication.

The quarter, Tycha, is described by Cicero as the third city; and he says it was so named from a Temple of Fortune within its precincts, and that it contained a spacious Gymnasium, and many sacred edifices. Of this once splendid quarter of the city little now remains, excepting large sepulchres cut in the rocks, channels of aqueducts, and vestiges of the city walls. To account for so large a space being so completely cleared of the remains of the numerous buildings which formerly occupied it, one is almost led to the supposition that, from the facility of transport given by the immediate vicinity of the port, the materials must have been transported to other shores.

Neapolis is the fourth quarter of the city mentioned by Cicero, and, as its name implies, was the last built. It was adorned with a theatre of vast dimensions, two superb temples—one of Ceres and another of Proserpine—and a very beautiful colossal statue of *Apollo Temenites*.

The theatre is perhaps the most perfect of all the ancient buildings of Syracuse. It was the largest in Sicily, and is computed to have contained 30,000 persons. Its situation, on a rising ground, commands a magnificent view over the ports and surrounding country. The greater portion of the seats are cut out of the the living rock.

In my examination of this edifice I had the great advantage to possess the elaborate and careful studies made in the previous year by Professor Donaldson; and as these have been given in so admirable a manner by that accomplished architect, in the supplementary volume of "Stewart's Athens," it is unnecessary for me to attempt a further description of a work already so familiar to the members of this Institute.

Above the theatre are numerous excavations in the rocks, remains of water courses, streets, and sepulchres. One, more perfect than the rest, is called the Tomb of Archimedes; and although the sepulchral stele, with the sphere and cylinder carved upon it, are no longer to be found to authenticate its identity, one feels unwilling to doubt that this must be the very monument discovered by Cicero, and pronounced by him as the sepulchre of the immortal Archimedes.

Not far from the theatre are the remains of an amphitheatre, which was also in part excavated from the platform of living rock. The arena, seats, corridors, podium, subterranean cells, and water-ducts are still easily traceable. The construction is evidently Roman.

The extensive quarries, or Latomiæ, are principally in this quarter of the city. They are said to have been excavated by the Athenian prisoners, and afterwards used as places of confinement. No greater contrast can be imagined than their former with their present state; for those once gloomy abodes of the victims of Dionysius are now flourishing with the luxurious vegetation of the pomegranite and the orange, and are watered by the transparent streams which still flow along the ancient channels; and the spot where the infamous Verres incarcerated not only Syracusans, but Roman citizens, is now termed "*Il Paradiso*." In this Latomia is the church of San Nicolo; under which is a chamber excavated from the rock, 64 feet 6 inches long, 22 feet 6 inches wide; and from the remains of a water-duct at one end it was probably used as a reservoir.

I must not pass by the curious cavern called the ear of Dionysius, which is about 170 feet in depth, 35 feet in width, and 60 feet in height. It is stated that Dionysius constructed this cavern on acoustic principles, for the purpose of overhearing the conversation of the prisoners confined within its walls. There is beyond doubt a wonderful power of conveying and increasing sound in this curious vault; but an examination of it, including the somewhat hazardous ascent with ropes and pullies to the cavity near the top, impressed us with the notion that this power, as is the case with most echoes, is more to be ascribed to accident than to art.

Neapolis was also adorned by a colossal statue of Apollo Temenites, which stood proudly pre-eminent on a rising ground, and was preserved, says Cicero, by its magnitude, from the sacrilegious grasp of Verres. Suetonius states, that it was contemplated by the emperor Tiberius to place it in the library which he had built, or restored, in honour of Augustus; but that he was prevented by the Deity in a vision.

The ruins of the Temple of Jupiter Olympius are situate on a gentle eminence on the right bank of the Anapus, overlooking the great port. Portions of the shafts of two Doric columns alone remain standing; but I am rather doubtful whether these are in the the original position. It is to be much regreted, that so little is left of this temple, which, in its original state, was described as the richest monument in Syracuse. In its adytum was placed the famous statue of Jupiter, esteemed one of the three* most noble representations of that deity ever produced, and from which Dionysius stripped off the golden mantle, replacing it with one of wool, accompanying his robbery with the impudent apology, that gold was too heavy in summer and too cold in winter for the king of the gods, but that wool was adapted for both seasons.

I believe I have now generally, though I fear very imperfectly, described the principal remains of the four quarters of the ancient city; and I will trespass for a few minutes longer only upon the attention of the meeting by making some short observations upon the suburbs and outworks.

Epipolæ, so celebrated in the sieges of Syracuse, is to the westward of Neapolis, on a spot (as its name imports) commanding the whole city. It was inclosed by Dionysius within those remarkable fortifications and walls said to have been constructed by him in the incredible short space of twenty days, and upon which he employed 60,000 workmen and 6,000 yoke of oxen.

It was also defended by a fort, which, according to Fazello, was called by the Greeks Labdalo, but Mr. Hughes is of opinion (judging from the descriptions of Thucydides and Diodorus) that Labdalo was considerably lower in the descent, and that the fort in question was the celebrated Hexapylon, a work constructed with extraordinary military skill and art. Mr. Cockerell (and I cannot appeal to a higher authority in these matters) states that he considers the remains of this fortress to be the most admirable specimen of ancient military architecture he had ever met with in all his extensive travels.

The principal entrance is admirably constructed for defence, with flank walls, from which the assailants were exposed to the attack of the defenders. Some of the walls are of solid masonry, 12 feet in thickness. Others, of that species of construction termed *Emplecton*,† are fifteen feet thick. At two of the angles of the walls are square towers of solid masonry, and there are several remains of fosses, twenty-five to thirty feet deep, cut in the solid rock, and defending the accessible approaches to the castle. In one part is a subterranean passage, nine feet wide and twelve feet high, leading in an inclined plane from the castle to the fosse, probably for the use of cavalry; and in other parts of the walls are small openings, about two feet in height, and sufficient to allow a man to creep through, by which the sorties were probably made.

The suburb of Epipolæ was terminated by a second almost impregnable fortress, called Euryale, mentioned particularly by Livy in his account of the siege of Syracuse, by Marcellus. In the seventeenth century the village of Belvedere was built on this spot, but no vestige of it now remains.

The river Anapus, so much vaunted by the poets and historians of old, is now a small stream, and its banks covered with lofty reeds and aquatic plants, growing so luxuriantly as almost to impede our progress in a small boat. We contrived, however, to reach the beautiful fountain of Cyane, a natural basin of about fifty feet in diameter, and celebrated by the poets as the spot where Pluto made his descent with Proserpine. We here saw the elegant Papyrus plant growing in great perfection, and it is said to be the only spot in *Europe* where this rare plant flourishes.

It has been remarked that there is no ancient example of any state so circumscribed in territory, extending so far and wide its influence, as Syracuse. In military fame she was equal to Lacedæmon, and contested successfully with the Athenians for naval pre-eminence! Her laws excited the admiration of Aristotle. The great Theban bard sung the victories of her conquerors in the games of Greece. From her power emanated the colonies of Acræ, Casmenæ, and Camarina. Her resources were so great, that Gelo offered to assist the Grecian states in their armament against the Persians with 28,000 troops and 200 *Triremes*, and, in addition, to supply provisions for the entire army of Greece, during the continuance of the war; and the perfection she had attained in the fine arts was such as to soften the hitherto rigid habits of her Roman conquerors, to refine their taste, and to excite and ensure their clemency.

Fazello tells us that her skill in works of gold, silver, and embroidery, was proverbial! The extent and magnificence of her buildings we have already adverted to. The superb medallions of Philistides sufficiently testify the superiority she had attained in the numismatic art; and of the extent of her sculptural embellishments we may form some idea from the remark of Cicero, that the Syracusans lost more *statues* by the rapacity of Verres than they did *men* by the *victories* of Marcellus.

The indefatigable Capodieci† presents us with a glorious list of warriors, statesmen, poets, philosophers, and men of science, whom he claims for Syracuse; and proud indeed must that city be which could produce Agathocles and Dionysius as commanders, Philistus as an historian! the poet Theocritus, and, greater by far than all these, her own Archimedes!

The achievements of the great Timoleon took place at Syracuse; within her walls the divine Plato for some time resided; the eloquence of Cicero was heard within her senate; and in later times the great apostle of Christianity tarried there on his way to Rome.

I trust this feeble attempt to describe the ancient Syracuse, will be excused, with all its imperfections; and most amply shall I be repaid if the interest of this meeting has been in the least degree promoted by a short account of that city, where the friendship of Damon and Pythias was fostered, and whose inhabitants derived their greatest pleasure in listening to the verses of Euripides!

SAMUEL ANGELL.

* One, in the Roman capital, from Macedonia; a second at Pontus; and the third at Syracuse.—*Cic. in Ver.*, 2, lib. iv.

† Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. 36, c. 22.

* Herodotus, lib. 7, cap. 157.

† The compiler of forty folio volumes on the antiquities of his native city.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF BUILDING COMMITTEES.*

MANY causes there are which operate to the continuance of existing evils; but if, on my own individual responsibility, I were called on to state the one which most of all conduces to hinder the advance of improvement in ecclesiastical architecture, I should attribute it to that monstrous anomaly usually known by the name of building committees. It is no theory which prompts the observation, nor is it any jealousy which would wish to confine to this society the care or the credit of architectural supervision, but it is the plain experience of many years which makes it almost a matter of truth to declare this opinion.

We may suppose that the type of these committees exists in the Metropolitan Church Building Association and the Church Building Commissioners. Now constituted as these bodies are of our superiors in the church, and with zeal and intention the most devoted and right minded, I am constrained to speak of them in no other terms than those of the profoundest respect; but what service they have done to the cause of church architecture every one who has had any experience of the matter very well knows. But why building committees are now to be formed in the country for building or restoring churches, one is quite at a loss to understand, for it is quite plain that they are the means of retard-

* From a paper by the Rev. Eccles Carter, read before the "Bristol and West of England Architectural Society." Although agreeing with it in the main, we are bound to say we have acted under committees, on more occasion than one, with the greatest satisfaction to ourselves.

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